

the appointment of a Military Attaché.

THE COMMITTEE:-

(6) Endorsed the remarks of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and instructed the Secretary to despatch a telegram accordingly.

2. DEFENCE OF HONG KONG - US/UK TALKS

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3. THE BERLIN SITUATION

TOP SECRET

A. Berlin - Quadrupartite Naval Blockade

(~~Document 8~~ (61) 120 (Final))

J.P. (61) 120 (Final)

THE COMMITTEE had before them a report by the Joint Planning Staff examining a letter from Her Majesty's Embassy, Washington, a report of the Interdepartmental blockade Working Group and a list of maritime actions, prepared by the Americans, which might be taken in reprisal against Soviet actions in Berlin and assessing the military feasibility of the proposed measures and their practical effects.

LORD MOUNTBATTEN said that the report by the Inter-departmental Blockade Working Group outlined limited maritime control measures which might be put into effect at the stage when limited land and air measures were also taking place. He felt that whereas Items 5(c), (b) and (d) of Part I might be carried out without leading to global war, there was little doubt that this did not apply to the other measures.

SIR CASPAR JOHN recalled that in April 1950, during a previous Berlin crisis, a similar study had been carried out by the Foreign Office and similar conclusions to those in the report before the Committee had been reached. Even Items 5 (a), (b) and (d) would involve every country in the world and present many legal problems; furthermore, the United Kingdom would suffer great economic loss.

He had always considered that the Russians would find a limited war at sea attractive and they would undoubtedly welcome an opportunity to launch a major submarine attack against our seaborne trade. A limited war under these conditions could hardly be undertaken in more unfortunate circumstances since it would be impossible to attack Russian bases which was the only way to deal effectively with the submarine threat of this nature. Since

"which it was necessary to do to help deal effectively with a submarine threat of this nature."

there would be a great risk of global war it would be necessary to place NATO forces on a war footing before undertaking any of these measures.

It was clear that Russia was not a suitable target against which maritime action could be used effectively and that none of the measures would achieve the aims for which they were designed.

In discussion the following points were made:-

- (a) It might be unwise to seek the advice of the major NATO Commanders since they might well seize the opportunity to press their bids for increased naval and air forces. The last sentence of paragraph 16(c) of the Annex to the report should therefore be deleted.
- (b) Although it was agreed that no detailed planning could be justified at this stage, even on a basis of no commitment, it would be inappropriate to resist the progressing of the report by the Inter-departmental Blockade Working Group since the United Kingdom would lay herself open to the inevitable charge of dragging her feet. It would be better if the United Kingdom representative on the Working Group should attempt to steer future discussions towards the conclusions in the report by the Joint Planning Staff.

THE COMMITTEE:-

- (1) Approved the report as amended at (a) above
- (2) Invited the Ministry of Defence to forward the report to the Foreign Office as the basis of a brief for use as at (b) above.

D. UKNMR 373

SIR THOMAS PIKE said that in this telegram General Norstad made proposals to the Ambassadorial Group on the circumstances in which fighters should be placed on air alert at the entrances to the air corridors, and those in which fighter escorts should be introduced. It also contained a request from General Norstad that he be delegated the authority to implement the air tactical operations phase of JACK PINE II. In addition, it contained General Norstad's proposals for the Rules of Engagement to be used by our fighter aircraft. There was only one point amongst these proposals in respect of which H.M. Government had not already signified agreement; this was on the question of instructions to pilots on opening fire. The Committee had previously agreed², and Ministers had endorsed, the principle that pilots should not be permitted to open fire until a Russian or D.B.R. plane had fired first. General Norstad, in paragraph 6, now proposed a modification to these Rules which would allow allied pilots to open fire in certain defined circumstances which would not necessarily require hostile aircraft to fire first. Whilst he (Sir Thomas Pike) had at first felt reluctant to support General Norstad's proposals, on reflection he felt that the

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Committee should recommend to Ministers that they should agree to them. He took this line not because he wished to avoid the continual accusation of foot-dragging, but because he believed that once matters had come to the stage described in paragraphs 3(A) and (b) of General Norstad's telegram, we could no longer reasonably expect our pilots to hold back if another of our aircraft were threatened.

MR. TOMKINS (Foreign Office) said that it now appeared that there might be no interference with our air access before the Russians had signed a peace treaty with the East Germans. General Norstad was therefore unlikely to need to invoke the authority he requested in the near future. Moreover, in the changed circumstances that would follow the signing of a peace treaty, there would be little room to doubt the hostile intentions of any Soviet or D.D.R. fighter which adopted an attacking position against our aircraft in the corridors.

In discussion the following point was made:-

(c) While the Committee felt similar hesitation to that expressed by the Chief of the Air Staff in accepting General Norstad's proposals, it was generally agreed that, in the circumstances defined, it was right to accede to his request.

THE COMMITTEE:-

- (3) Agreed with the statement by the Chief of the Air Staff.
- (4) Took note that the Chief of the Defence Staff would seek the approval of the Minister of Defence accordingly.
- (5) Invited the Foreign Office to take note of their views and of the action being taken at (4) above.

4. GHANA

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5. LIMITATION OF THE FUTURE COST OF DEFENCE CONFIDENTIAL

Recorded in the Secretary's Standard File